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By *ADAM FITZ-ADAM.*

To be continued every THURSDAY.

THURSDAY, *May* the 13th, 1756.

GOING to viſit an old friend at his country ſeat laſt week, I found him at backgammon with the vicar of the pariſh. My friend received me with the heartieſt welcome, and introduced the doctor to my acquaintance. This gentleman, who ſeemed to be about fifty, and of a florid and healthy conſtitution, ſurveyed me all over with great attention, and after a ſlight nod of the head, ſat himſelf down without opening his mouth. I was a little hurt at the ſupercilious behaviour of this divine, which my friend obſerving, told me very pleaſantly, that I was rather too old to be entitled to the doctor's complaiſance; for that he ſeldom beſtowed

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it but upon the young and vigorous: but, ſays he, you will know him better ſoon, and may probably think it worth your while to *book* him in the WORLD; for you will find him altogether as odd a character as he is a worthy one. The doctor made no reply to this raillery, but continued ſome time with his eyes fixed upon me, and at laſt, ſhaking his head, and turning to my friend, aſked if he would play out the other hit. My friend excuſed himſelf from engaging any more that evening, and ordered a bottle of wine, with pipes and tobacco, to be ſet on the table. The vicar filled his pipe, and drank very cordially to my friend, ſtill eying me with a ſeeming diſlike, and neither drinking my health, nor ſpeaking a ſingle word to me. As I have long accuſtomed myſelf to drink nothing but water, I called for a bottle of it, and drank glaſs for glaſs with them; which upon the doctor's obſerving, he ſhook his head at my friend, and in a whiſper, loud enough for me to hear, ſaid, "Poor man, it's all over with him, I ſee." My friend ſmiled, and anſwered in the ſame audible whiſper, "No, no, doctor, Mr. Fitz-Adam intends "to live as long as either of us." He then addreſſed himſelf to me on the occurrences of the town, and drew me into a very chearful converſation, which laſted till I withdrew to reſt; at which time the doctor roſe from his chair, drank a bumper to my health, and giving me a hearty ſhake by the hand, told me I was a very jolly old gentleman, and that he wiſhed to be better acquainted with me during my ſtay in the country.

I ROSE early in the morning, and found the doctor in the breakfaſt room. He ſaluted me with great civility, and told me he had left his bed and home ſooner than uſual, to have the pleaſure of taking a walk with me. "Your friend, ſays he, is but lately recovered "from an attack of the gout, and will hardly be ſtir-"ring till we have gone over his improvements." I accepted of the propoſal, and we walked through a very elegant garden into the moſt beautiful fields that can be imagined; which as I ſtopped to admire, the doctor began thus. "Theſe are indeed, Mr. Fitz-Adam, "very delightful grounds; and I wiſh with all my "heart that the owner of them was leſs troubled with "the gout, that I might hold him in more reſpect"——

"Reſpect

"Reſpect! doctor, ſaid I, interrupting him, does a "painful diſtemper, acquired by no act of intemperance, "leſſen your reſpect?" "It does indeed, Mr. Fitz-"Adam, and I wiſh, in this inſtance, I could help it; for "I am under many obligations to your friend. There "is another very worthy gentleman in the neighbour-"hood, who preſented me to this vicarage; but he "has the misfortune to labour under an inveterate ſcur-"vy, which by ſubjecting him to continual head-achs, "muſt of courſe ſhorten his days; and ſo I never go "near him."

I WAS going to interrupt the doctor again, when a coach and ſix drove by us along the road, and in it a gentleman, who let down the glaſs, and made the doctor a very reſpectful bow; which inſtead of returning, he paſſed by him with a ſtately air, and took no notice of him. This inſtance of his behaviour, together with the converſation that had paſſed between us, raiſed my curioſity to a very high degree, and ſet me upon aſking him who the gentleman was. "Sir, ſays he, that un-"fortunate object is a man of eight thouſand a year "eſtate; and from that conſideration he expects the "return of a bow from every man he meets. But I, "who know him, know alſo that he is dying of an "aſthma; and as (bleſſed be God for it) I am in per-"fect health, I do not chuſe to put myſelf on a level "with ſuch a perſon. Health, Mr. Fitz-Adam, is the "only valuable thing on earth; and while I am in "poſſeſſion of that, I look upon myſelf as a much "greater man than he. With all his fortune, he would "rejoice to be the poor vicar of ***, with My conſti-"tution. I pull off my hat to no ſuch perſons. Be-"lieve me, Mr. Fitz-Adam, he has not many months "to live."

I MADE no reply to this converſation of the vicar, and he went on thus. "You are an old man, Mr. "Fitz-Adam, and I believe were a little fatigued with "your journey laſt night, which I miſtook for infirm "health, and therefore was wanting in the civilities that "I ſhould otherwiſe have ſhewn you; but your conver-"ſation afterwards proved you to be a very hearty man, "and I ſaw you reſolved to continue ſo by your temper-

"ance;

" ance; for which I honour you, and, as I told you " then, ſhall be glad of your acquaintance. 'Tis true " you are an old man, and therefore my inferior; but " you are healthy and temperate, and not beneath the " notice of much younger men."

In this manner we walked on, till we came to a hedge, where ſome labouring men were repairing the fences. My companion accoſted them with the utmoſt complaiſance and good-nature. " Ay, ſays he, turning " to me, theſe are men worth mixing with. You ſee " their riches in their looks. Have you any of your " lords in town, Mr. Fitz-Adam, that have ſuch poſ- " ſeſſions? I know none of theſe lords, ſays he, my- " ſelf, but I am told they are all ſo ſickly and diſeaſed, " that a man in health would ſcorn to pull off his hat " to them." He then entered into a familiar converſation with the men, and after throwing them ſix pence to drink, paſſed on.

There now overtook us in the lane a company of ſportſmen ſetting out for the chace. Moſt of them ſaluted the doctor as they paſſed, but he took no notice of any of them but one, whom he ſhook hands with over the hedge, and told him he intended taking a dinner with him the next day. " That gentleman, ſays he, " is worth as much health as any man in England: he " hunts only by way of exerciſe, and never takes a leap " where there is the leaſt danger. But as for the reſt, " they are flying over every hedge and gate in their " way, and if they eſcape broken necks in the morning, " they are deſtroying themſelves more effectually by " intemperance in the evening. No, no, Mr. Fitz- " Adam, theſe are no companions for me; I hope, " with the bleſſing of Heaven, to out-live a ſcore of " them."

We came ſoon after to a little neat houſe upon the road, where the doctor told me lived a very agreeable widow lady, to whom he had formerly paid his addreſſes. " She had at that time, ſays he, as large a " fortune of health as any woman in the county; but " ſhe has ſince mortgaged it to the apothecary for ſlops, " and I have taken my leave of her. She was deter- " mined to be a widow, and ſo married an officer, who " got his head knocked off at Fontenoy. Thoſe are a " ſort of men that I make no acquaintance with; the

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" hold their lives on too precarious a tenure." " But they " are uſeful members of ſociety, ſaid I, and command " our eſteem." " That may be, ſir, returned the doctor, " and ſo are the miners in our coal-pits, who are every " hour in danger of being buried alive. But there is a " ſubordination of degree, Mr. Fitz-Adam, which " ought ſtrictly to be obſerved; and a man in ill health, " or of a dangerous profeſſion, ſhould not think himſelf " on a level with people of ſound conſtitutions, and leſs " hazardous employments."

I WAS determined to interrupt the doctor no more; and he went on thus. " Mr. Fitz-Adam, you may " poſſibly think me an odd kind of a man; but I am " no enemy to people of bad conſtitutions, nor ever " withhold my bounty from them, when their neceſſities " demand it; but though I am doing them all the ſer- " vices in my power, I cannot conſent to lower myſelf " ſo far as to make them my companions. It is more " in the power of the phyſician to confer rank, than " the king; for the gifts of fortune are nothing; health " is the only riches that a man ought to ſet a value on; " and without it, all men are poor, let their eſtates be " what they will. If I differ from the common opi- " nion in this particular, I do alſo in another. The " tradeſman or mechanic, who has acquired an eſtate " by his induſtry, is ſeldom reckoned a gentleman; " but it was always my ſentiment, that a man who " makes his own conſtitution, has more merit in him " than he that was born with it: the one is the work " of chance, the other of deſign: and it is for this rea- " ſon that I am ſeen ſo often with your friend: for " though the gout is generally an impoveriſhing diſ- " temper, yet temperance and regularity may in time " ſubdue it: whereas the gentleman who drove by us " with his ſix horſes, has an incurable aſthma, which " renders him, with his large eſtate, as poor as the " beggar who is dying under a hedge. The more you " think of theſe things, Mr. Fitz-Adam, the more you " will be of my opinion. A poor man in health, is a " companion for a king; but a lord without it, is a " poor man indeed; and why ſhould he expect the " homage of other people, when the very meaneſt of " his domeſtics would refuſe to change places with " him?"